

Message Text

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42

ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EB-03 L-01 NSC-05 NSCE-00 SP-02

INR-05 SSO-00 INRE-00 /035 W

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FM AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4210

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KINSHASA 7704

LIMDIS

FOR AF/C

E.O. 11652: GDS

SUBJ: US AID TO ZAIRE

REF: STATE (A) STATE 194784, (B) 186040, (C) KINSHASA 7688

1. AFTER REF (C) WAS SENT, THE COMMERCIAL ATTACHE CALLED ME TO SAY THE EX-FOREIGN MINISTER AND NOW HEAD OF THE LARGE IMPORT HOUSE (SAPA) BAMBOKO--HAD TELEPHONED CONCERNING ZAIRE'S URGENT NEED FOR RICE. I TRIED THE PHONE NUMBER BAMBOKO HAD LEFT, BUT AFTER SEVERAL BUSY SIGNALS, DECIDED TO DRIVE TO HIS OFFICE.

2. BOMBOKO RECEIVED ME IMMEDIATELY AND SAID HE WAS APPRECIATIVE OF OUR PROMPT RESPONSE. HE SAID THAT MOBUTU HAD CHARGED HIM WITH ASSURING ZAIRE'S RICE REQUIREMENTS, IN THE FACE OF A MOUNTING CRISIS. BAMBOKO SAID THAT THE NEXT HARVEST WOULD NOT COME IN BEFORE FEBRUARY-MARCH 1976 AND THAT A COMBINATION OF A LACK OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE AND CHICOM INABILITY TO FILL THE GAP MEANT A "RUPTURE" IN SUPPLIES OVER THE NEXT SIX MONTHS. ACCORDING TO BAMBOKO, A 60-KG SACK OF RICE WHICH WHOLESALERS FOR 10 Z IS NOW SELLING FOR 35 Z RETAIL. IT'S CATASTROPHIC, HE SAID.

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3. BAMBOKO MAINTAINED THAT ZAIRE NEEDS 25-30 THOUSAND TONS

OF RICE SOONEST. ACCORDING TO HIM ANNUAL REQUIREMENT IS 100,000, OF WHICH 60,000 ARE PRODUCED LOCALLY. (WE ARE REPORTING SEPARATELY THE FIGURES WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO DEVELOP IN THIS CONNECTION). BAMBOKO DID SAY THAT THE CHINESE HAD "PROMISED" 10 THOUSAND TONS--BUT THEY DIDN'T KNOW WHEN THAT WOULD ARRIVE.

4. I RECOUNTED THE VARIOUS APPROACHES WE HAD HAD ON RICE WITHIN THE DAY AND EXPLAINED THAT, AS FAR AS CCC WAS CONCERNED, WE REQUIRED A NOTE FROM THE FOREIGN MINISTRY, WHICH WAS IN TRAIN. I ALSO RAISED THE GENERAL ECONOMIC/ FINANCIAL SITUATION AND THE IMF SCENARIO. BAMBOKO SAID "YOU ARE PREACHING TO A CONVINCED MAN" AND PROMISED THAT HE WOULD WEIGH IN WITH MOBUTU ON THE SIDE OF A MULTILATERAL SOLUTION.

5. OUR RECOMMENDATIONS AS TO POSSIBLE SPLIT BETWEEN PL-480 AND CCC WILL FOLLOW.
WALKER

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Message Attributes

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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